

~~TOP SECRET~~ [REDACTED]

(b)(3)

SENIOR EXECUTIVE INTELLIGENCE BRIEF
 17 January 2003
 PASS SEIB 03-014CHX

Iraq: Saddam Taking Coercive Action To Ensure Military Fights [REDACTED]

(b)(3)

Saddam began his Army Day speech last week by warning that soldiers who retreat would draw the wrath of Allah, and his commanders are preparing to use draconian means to prevent soldiers from fleeing or deserting.

-- [REDACTED] execution squads charged with killing soldiers who try to retreat or surrender are collocated with Republican Guard (RG) and Regular Army (RA) units.

(b)(3)

-- Some 300 Directorate of Military Intelligence officers last month were assigned to I Corps in northern Iraq and ordered to use all force necessary to quell any talk of desertion,

(b)(3)

(b)(1)

(b)(3)

[REDACTED] much of the RG is preparing for urban combat to try to maximize coalition military casualties. The willingness of RG soldiers to fight probably is much stronger than that of RA forces because of the RG's better training, pay, and leadership and its closer ties to the regime.

(b)(3)

-- During the 1991 Gulf war, RG morale held up despite consistent coalition air attacks. Although outmatched by US weapon systems and ultimately defeated, Guard units--until the end of the war--tried to execute their mission to meet and stop the coalition advance into southern Iraq.

-- The will to fight will vary by individual and unit throughout the Iraqi military and will depend, in part, on combat conditions and regime control measures facing each unit.

(b)(3)

Saddam in his speeches has stressed the military's ability to avoid defeat and rebuild, but low morale apparently is widespread. Reporting on morale often relies on hearsay or reflects views of a self-selected sample of Iraqis serving as intelligence sources, but a body of reporting since the middle of last year points to morale problems similar to those experienced during the Iran-Iraq and Gulf wars.

-- [REDACTED] the military expects Saddam to concede the south

(b)(3)

~~TOP SECRET~~ [REDACTED]

(b)(3)

~~TOP SECRET~~

(b)(3)

to the coalition in order to concentrate on defending Baghdad and that RA soldiers in the south will desert if their commanders run.

(b)(1)

(b)(3)

(b)(1)

(b)(3)

(b)(3)

~~TOP SECRET~~

(b)(3)